

**Goldman, L.R., R.D. Stephens, R. Borzelleri and K. Kizer (1991). Dioxins in California: A widespread problem, California Department of Health Services.**

Polychlorodibenzo-p-dioxins (dioxins) and polychlorodibenzofurans (furans) are industrial by-products which are extremely toxic in even the most minute amounts. These compounds cause birth defects, cancer, and acute toxicity in animals, and they are classified as probable human carcinogens. Almost nonexistent in preindustrial times, dioxins and furans are now found in increasing levels in air, soil, water, food, and human and animal tissues. Physicians may be unprepared to answer questions about dioxin contamination. In this paper we present an overview of the available toxicological information about dioxins and information on how to diagnose and manage suspected dioxin contamination based on a survey of existing literature as well as investigations conducted by the California Department of Health Services of nationally-important, recently-discovered incidents of contamination in California. Physicians need to gain expertise about dioxins, and there is need for further research and government action.